

HOW CARS ARE BUILT.

Interesting Facts About the Construction of Coaches and Engines

PICKED UP AT FT. WAYNE SHOPS.

What the Hospital Department of a Great Railroad is Like and

SOMETHING OF THE WORK IT DOES

(WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.)

THE hospital department, otherwise known as the repair shops, of a great railroad, is a place full of interesting sights. There, perhaps, better than anywhere else, one obtains an adequate idea of the immense expenditure of time, labor and money; the innumerable mechanical appliances required in railroad work and the thousands of details, all of them important, which are necessary to keep the rolling stock in a serviceable condition.

A few days ago, armed with a pass from Superintendent A. B. Starr, of the Erie, Fort Wayne and Chicago Railway, which was an open season to scores of doors on which the words "Positively No Admission" were stenciled in bold capitals, accompanied by Mr. William Lowe, of the Master Mechanic's office, who acted as guide and interpreter, I made a tour of the extensive railroad shops in Allegheny.

Several hours were pleasantly spent, and it is scarcely necessary to add that I came away more than ever impressed with the magnitude of one branch of the railroad business.

At the Allegheny shops, which are the principal shops of the Fort Wayne road, are made all repairs required in the rolling stock on the eastern division; locomotives, freight and passenger cars are also built and equipped for use here. The buildings alone cover several acres of ground and the yard tracks and lumber yards several more. The whole forming one mammoth industrial establishment, which gives employment to about 800 men. It is equipped with vast quantities of machinery, ranging from the simplest to the most complicated, and the greater portion of which is very costly.

The wear and tear of railroad material is something enormous. Provided it escapes

being smashed or burned in a wreck a freight car lasts on an average perhaps ten years, a passenger car 16 years and a locomotive 16 to 18. Each must be repaired frequently—the locomotive often several times. To estimate the length of time that a car or an engine could be run without returning to the shop for repairs is impossible, as it frequently happens that new material breaks sooner than that which is old and accustomed to hard usage.

A locomotive usually has many of its parts replaced, some of them several times, so that by the time it is condemned as useless comparatively little of the original remains. The importance of keeping both locomotives and cars in thorough repair must be apparent even to a person not versed in the technicalities of the railroad business; but the knowledge that such quantities of material and such a large force of workmen should be required for this very necessary work, even on such a road as the Fort Wayne, was a surprising revelation to me, as perhaps it was to many readers of THE DISPATCH.

In making the rounds of the shops we first visited the lumber yards, where immense quantities of lumber, chiefly oak and yellow pine, are stored. As much as 15,000 feet of lumber are used daily it will readily be seen that great quantities must be kept in stock. The oak used comes principally from Pennsylvania forests, and the yellow pine from the South and West.

The former is used for many purposes, and the better grades of it, especially for finishing the interior of passenger coaches. It is bought sawed in the form known as "quarter cut," which, when worked, makes a most beautiful wood for ornamental work. The lumber all comes to the yards in the rough, and is cut, shaped, planed and made ready for use in the planing mill, which stands near the yard. All wood used in the construction of passenger coaches must be thoroughly seasoned, and to do this work there is a dryhouse, provided with a complete system of heating apparatus and fans, which render it possible to perform the many difficult operations required to bring the sticks of timber into shape for use. The lower floor contains the machinery for the heavy work, and upstairs is a department devoted principally to

the preparation of the fine woodwork for passenger coaches. Each piece of timber, as it leaves the mill, is finished, bored and cut in shape so that it will fit perfectly in the place for which it is designated. The processes are a larger expense to the workmen are also paid by the piece. Four different trades are combined in carbuilding—car-

entry, blacksmithing, smithing and fitting. It costs \$440 to frame a car and complete the body of it. This being done, the platforms are still to be added, the top to be roofed, the interior furnished, and so on until the coach is sent out upon the track resplendent with paint, varnish, gilt letters, in complete order for railroading. The entire cost for labor and material of the coaches built at the Allegheny shops is \$4,900 each.

But we have not yet visited the upstairs department of the planing mill. Let us enter the noisy place again and ascend the stairs. Here the panels for the interior of passenger cars are planed, and the blinds, seats and window frames constructed. Several expert wood carvers are working in one part of the room, carving rosettes and ornaments in car for ornamental purposes. A small figure, perhaps four inches square, is carved

at a cost of \$1.75. Another workman gets \$10 for carving a narrow piece of wood to go above the door of a car. Some exquisite work is done in this line, and enough of it is required to keep several carvers at work all the time.

An adjoining room contains the upholstery department, where the car seats are put together. I had the remotest idea of what constituted the interior of a car until I saw the material being arranged. There is a wooden frame, on which are tacked strips of burlap; spring springs are placed beneath; then comes the cushion, the whole is covered with muslin and the muslin with plush. The cushions, for seats and backs, are stuffed with hair. A very ingenious machine, by the way, is used for the purpose of picking and cleaning the hair. The material is run quickly through and comes out ready for use.

A visit to the paint shop next. Nothing here is of particular interest save the process by which old paint is removed from cars that are to be coated anew. A workman melts in a bucket a burning gas jet, which he holds against the wooden unit, the paint and oil begins to run. This done the surface is scraped clean, and is then ready for new paint.

The shops contain room for 25 to 28 passenger cars, which may be undergoing repairs at one time. As for freight cars, the repairs on which are made out of doors, but the material is brought in to the shops for the workmen each week. The transfer table, by means of which the passenger cars are taken from the yard tracks into the car shop, is a very ingenious arrangement for transferring a car from the track on which it comes in to another at right angles, running into the building. It consists of a movable track running on rails which have a space between them equal to the length of the car. By running the car on the table and then running the table down this track, the car can readily be placed in any part of the building desired.

Next we go to the blacksmithing department of the car shops. Here, as in the case with the wood in the planing mill, all the iron used in building cars is cut, forged and worked into shape or immediate use. Hundreds of pieces of different shape and size are rapidly wrought. The place is full of glowing forges, powerful machines—and noise. The same is true of the engine blacksmithing shop, only here the machines are more numerous and such a large force of workmen skilled in the part of the workmen.

ONE TRUST DOOMED.

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ORIGIN OF THE GREAT LAKES.

A Great Area of Land That Can Be Redeemed From Sterility.

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LL persons who give any thought to the economic conditions of society are much interested in the novel industrial devices known as trusts. Although all these curious devices are instructive subjects for study, there is one that which particularly commends itself to those interested in such matters, for the reason that it promises to afford a test better than any other as to the effect of such organizations on the economic future of civilized people. This may be designated as the Copper Trust. In 1887 the extensive development of the copper mines in the Lake Superior district, in the Rocky Mountains and elsewhere had lowered the price of copper to about 11 cents per pound, or about one-half the average value of the metal in the preceding decade. Although this low price vastly stimulated the consumption of copper, few of the mines were operated at any profit and ruin was before the most of them. It was clear that the low price must soon lead to the stoppage of the production and that a rise in the value of the metal was a commercial necessity. Some French capitalists, with the characteristic commercial imagination of that people, were the first to make a good account of this condition of the copper market. They bought up a large part of the 40,000 tons of copper then in the market, and they quickly secured the control of the product from most of the leading mines in the world, and placed the price of the metal at about 15 cents a pound. At present this association, known as the Societe des Metaux, controls between 80 and 90 per cent of the copper produced, and they are able to maintain the price at such a figure as almost all the mines in the world are unable to produce a profit. For some time it seemed possible that the strength of this organization might endure for many years; but it is evident to those who take account of the copper market that the copper market that the control of this syndicate cannot endure for any considerable term of years.

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Its failure is foredoomed by the following circumstances: In the first place, the price of copper leads to the search for new mines; each month some new source of supply is opened which adds to the total stock of copper in the world. At the same time, the increase of the price drives manufacturers from the use of the substance in many arts or leads them to be more economical in making use of it as a resource.

Under the influence of this stimulus, the copper production of the United States has doubled in the course of six years. The supply of copper is accumulating in the markets and it promises in the course of a few years to exceed the carrying power of the great Societe des Metaux.

In other words, it seems likely that the copper trust will present us in a quick way with an illustration of the fate which is most likely to overtake all trusts whatsoever which endeavor to control the production and sale of standard articles of human need. In order to effect the control of the world's markets, they must build a dam across the rivers of trade; for a time they may be able to control the tide and sell at particular prices at their own prices, but the earth is fertile and men are ingenious, so, in the course of time varying with the character of the article, the dam will be overwhelmed in such a manner as to prove destructive to those who have trusted overmuch.

Although we may hope something from legislation in the control of these trustful of the world's products, it seems to most students of economics that we may more safely put our trust in the operation of natural law. It has always been the policy of those who seek to block the wheels of commerce; the students of society perceive that the great advances have not come from legal control, but from the operation of those natural laws, of which the statutes are only the temporary modes of expression. What we need most at the present time is a starting example as to the fate of trusts. It seems likely that we shall owe something of this teaching to the Societe des Metaux within the term of five years.

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Although we may hope something from legislation in the control of these trustful of the world's products, it seems to most students of economics that we may more safely put our trust in the operation of natural law. It has always been the policy of those who seek to block the wheels of commerce; the students of society perceive that the great advances have not come from legal control, but from the operation of those natural laws, of which the statutes are only the temporary modes of expression. What we need most at the present time is a starting example as to the fate of trusts. It seems likely that we shall owe something of this teaching to the Societe des Metaux within the term of five years.

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